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ABSTRACT

A study of the English language needs and attitudes of students and faculty in Kuwait University's College of Petroleum and Engineering is reported. The objective was to create a basis for assessing the relevance of the institution's current English second language program. Data were gathered through: (1) interviews with faculty, teaching assistants, and students to determine English language task types and perceptions of the relative importance of skills, subskills, and language deficiencies, (2) observation of classes for information on notetaking, question patterns, Arabic use, and other classroom language issues; (3) analysis of student projects, class handouts, lab instructions, and assignments to determine common text and task types; and (4) administration of questionnaires (appended) concerning language demands, language needs, and attitudes toward language instruction among faculty, teaching assistants, and students. Results are detailed here in two sections: those pertaining to faculty and teaching assistants, and those pertaining to students. Findings are summarized relating to instruction in engineering courses, student language needs, and views on English language instruction and language learning. Suggestions for action are made in each case, and data summaries are included. (MSE)

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ED 413 762

The Language Needs Analysis Project at the College of Petroleum and Engineering Kuwait University

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There are a number of people to thank among the Faculty and students of the College of Engineering. Many faculty members and students gave us their valuable time for interviews and important insights about English Language use in the College were gained in this way. Special thanks go to the Heads of Departments in the College for their cooperation in helping us administer questionnaires to faculty and teaching assistants.

We wish to thank also the Center for Evaluation and Research for their advice and help in preparing a further means of measuring student needs. This means is as yet at a developmental stage waiting application in the Fall.

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Outline of Project Aims, Procedures and Data

Summary of Aims

A full account of the projected outcomes and objectives of this project is contained in Appendix 1, Provisional Statement of Outcomes and Objectives. In summary, the major objective of the project is to establish a data base of information concerning the use of English Language by students in the College. This will enable the ELU to identify the English Language demands students meet in their engineering studies, the areas of difficulty students face and to gage attitudes towards English Language instruction in the College. Such a data base can then enable the English Language Unit (ELU) to evaluate and possibly modify the courses they provide from a sound basis of knowledge of the wider environment in which the unit operates.

The objective of this, the first stage of the project was to gather the data needed. As language needs and perceptions of needs may change over the four year period of undergraduate study in the College, the study aimed to to collect data on students at various stages of their undergraduate study.

In the second stage of the project planned for Fall 1996, findings from stage one will be juxtaposed with the objectives and contents of the courses presently offered in ELU.

Specifically the first stage has involved the collection of information on students' and faculty perceptions of students' language needs, faculty expectations of students' English language proficiency, identification of the range of language based tasks and discourse types students face in the

Summary of Procedures

A detailed outline of the design of the study is contained in Appendix 2, Operational Plan. The plan details steps, procedures, the time frame of the study, indicators of achievement, etc.

In short, the methodology underlying the study has been both qualitative, thus involving interviews, class observations and examination of student material/samples, and quantitative through the implementation of questionnaires.

The major methods of investigation have been:

- Interviews with faculty, teaching assistants and students to establish the type of tasks that students in the College need to do in English and perceptions of relative importance of skills, sub-skills and language deficiencies.
- Observation of classes in the college to find out their nature. To see, for example, whether students take notes, ask questions, use Arabic, etc. in such classes.
- Collection of student material samples, for example, projects written by students for their courses, examples of handouts given to students during lectures, instruction sheets for labs, assignments, etc. to identify the types of texts/tasks they face.

- Administration of questionnaires to faculty, teaching assistants and students to gather quantitative data on perceptions of demands, language needs, attitudes towards English Language instruction. etc.

Data

A quantity of information has now been brought into being by means of the investigation. This data can now form a data base for the ELU. The forms of this information are as follows:

1. 6 completed protocols and notes from interviews held with graduate students.
2. 4 completed protocols and notes from interviews held with faculty members.
3. 4 completed observation protocols and notes taken of classes in the College
4. 210 completed student questionnaires from 3 groups of students: 1) students registered in 098 English courses who are those following basic 100 pre-engineering courses such as maths or calculus, 2) students registered in 123 courses who are those following mainly core, basic engineering courses at the 100 and 200 level, and 3) students registered in 221 English courses who are those following 300 and 400 level courses which are courses in distinct specialist areas of Engineering. 70 completed questionnaires were collected from each of these 3 groups.
5. 65 completed faculty and teaching assistant questionnaires.
6. A set of sample materials from classes/courses in the College

In addition to the above, a file of articles on the subject of identification of language needs and samples of needs analyses used in other universities have been collected from literature. This file should be of use to others involved in this area in ELU Engineering in the future or ELUs in other colleges of the University.

Findings

2.1 Faculty and Teaching Assistants

2.1.1. Discussion

In this section of the report, responses to items on the questionnaire given by faculty (F) and teaching assistants (TAs) are discussed. A copy of this questionnaire can be seen in Appendix. Although the main line of argument in this section of the report is based on interpetation of data from the questionnaire, information gathered from the interviews held with F and TAs and also from our observations of classes in the College is used in some cases to explain the numerical data generated by the questionnaire.

Sample Population

Data was obtained from a sample of 65 F and TAs spread evenly across the 7 departments of the Engineering College, with the exception of a smaller sample from the new Department of Industrial Engineering. The sample represents fairly evenly both new, i.e. those with 0-3 years service (N= 32) and longer F and TAs, i.e. those with 4 or more years service (N=33). Two thirds of the sample were native Arabic speakers reflecting fairly well the balance of Arabs and non-Arabic groups in the College.

A limitation on the data source is that a greater majority of the sample were currently involved in teaching higher (200, 300 and 400) level courses rather than 100 level. This may be explained due to the fact that many 100 level courses are run in the College of Science rather than Engineering.

Findings Relating to Instruction in Engineering Courses

1. English is generally reported by F and TAs to be used more than 80% of class time. 45 F and TAs reported using English 80% or more of class time whereas 18 reported using it less than 80% of the time. Observations of classes conducted by F showed that almost all lecturing is very largely done in English but Arabic may be used in the more interactive, question/answer session phrases of the class.

2. Lectures, especially those including question/answer sessions are predominant class mode in the College, followed by lab. sessions and discussion based classes. Most lab sessions are conducted by TAs as are a majority of discussion based classes, such as problem solving sessions.

3. Opinion is divided on whether success in Engineering courses is related to students' proficiency in English. Although, all interviewees stressed how important the level of English proficiency is for students, questionnaire data (responses to item 7, section I on F/TA questionnaire) revealed a more ambivilant attitude to the role of English. A marked difference was seen in the responses to this item between F and TAs. Over half of TAs agreed that success in Engineering studies is related to students' proficiency in English Language compared to around one third of F. This divergence of opinion may be due to the fact that TAs are involved more with students production of English. It is they who grade written papers and generally conduct interative instruction modes in which students need to speak. Moreover, a number of TAs are not particurlaly proficient in English themselves compared to F and thus may be more aware of language problems and their effects.

Findings Related to Student English Language Needs

1. Very little divergence was seen across the different departments in the colleges in respect to their reponses to items the *Language Needs* section of the questionnaire. This indicates that students language needs are seen as fairly homogeneous across the College and vary little between departments.

2. The receptive skills of reading and listening were seen as significantly more important to students than the productive skills of speaking, and in particular, writing. For example, reading comprehension was ranked as of 1st or second most importance by 79% of questionnaire respondents compared to writing which ranked as such by only 18.6%. Interviewees informed us that students' writing is rarely seen by F members. The tendency is for TAs to grade written work and they focus on numerical data and calculations that are presented rather than the text. Additionally, due to the low level of English of a number of TAs, they may not be in a position to comment on the writing as such. Students are well aware of the English level of those who asses their written work and the areas that they are evaluated on. Writing skills or accuracy of written language was reported by interviewees as of little importance.

2. Specific tasks within skills areas were identified from interviews and observations in the College. They were itemized to form Section II, question 2 in the questionnaire. On the whole, these specific tasks and texts types were agreed to as being important for students by the great majority of F and TA as

Suggestions for Action:

- As no major differences were seen in the importance given to skill areas and task/types within them across the different departments of the College, ELU should continue in its policy of offering courses targeted at general engineering needs rather than targeted at needs of specific specialisms of Engineering.

- ELU to assess its course objectives and the weighting given to skill areas and evaluation of students in the light of the above findings. For example, presently, more emphasis is given to writing skills objectives and evaluation and less to reading skills.

- Further work to be done to identify subskills involved in specific task/text types seen as of most importance. For example, subskills involved in reading a textbook would include - using headings, sub-headings or index to locate information, extracting specific information from text, making notes on a written text, etc. The identifcation of subskills can then become the basis for a carefully targeted specification of course objectives and criteria for evaluation of students.

Findings on Views on English Language Instruction

1. The great majority of F and TAs felt that *more* English instruction should be given.

Section III of the questionnaire.

Item 1: *More time should be given over to English Language instruction.*

Nearly 90% agreement

Item 4: *More should be done to help students with developing speaking skills.*

Over 90% agreement

Item 5: *Some instruction should be given to develop the language skills students need for their work as engineers after college.*

Over 80% agreement

The implication of giving more instruction, however, is that less time would be available for science/maths and engineering instruction in the College.

In regard to developing speaking skills, caution is needed as speaking was seen as the third least important skill are by F and TAs.

2. Paradoxically F and TAs *agreed* fairly equally that instruction should focus on both general English (around 80% agreement) and English targeted specifically at the needs of Engineering students (around 85% agreement).

However, a marked difference was seen in the number of F and TAs who *agreed strongly* that instruction in the College should focus on language objectives specific to the needs of Engineering students rather than general English (over 60% compared to just over 20%). The former finding may well reflect the low level of awareness among the College about the nature of ESP courses as offered in ELU as evidenced in interviews.

3. F and TAs are to some extent divided on the issue of whether only students who already have good English Language proficiency should be admitted to the College. Two-thirds agree on this principle, but less than one third *agree strongly.*

Suggestions for Action:

- Discussions should be held with Faculty to establish whether more instruction time can realistically be given over to English and whether this really would be an area to be prioritized by College.

- F to be made more aware of nature and aims of ESP (as opposed to general English) and the advantages of ESP in sitation where very limited instruction time is available and where there is a fairly homogenous group with specifiable needs. Interviews in particular revealed the tendency of faculty to believe in *a mud on the wall approach* to English instruction, i.e. the more of anything - Toefl, general English, conversation classes - would surely solve all and any language deficiencies.

2.1.2. Presentation of Data

I Profile of Faculty and Teaching Assistants

1. Department in the College

Total number of respondents = 65
Faculty = 37
Teaching assistants = 28

Department	F	TA	No.
Electrical	6	4	10
Computer	6	4	10
Chemical	6	4	10
Industrial	1	4	5
Mechanical	6	4	10
Petroleum	6	4	10
Civil	6	4	10

2. Length of time teaching at Kuwait University

Years	No. F & TAs
0-3	32
4-6	22
more than 7	11

3. Current course levels taught

Course level	No. F & TAs
100	6
200	31
300	47
400	39

4. Native Arabic speakers

Native Arabic speakers = 45
Others = 20

5. Amount of class time conducted in English

Percentage of class time	No. of F&TAs
approx 100%	21
80-99%	22
60-79%	16
less than 60%	2

6. Teaching modes used by faculty and teaching assistants

Mode	No. F & TAs
monologue type lecture	23
lecture with question/answer sessions	34
discussion based classes	16
lab sessions	28

II Language Needs

1. Perceptions of of relative importance of skill areas for studies in College.

Ranking

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Reading Comprehension	44.19 %	34.88%	9.3%	11.63%
Listening Comprehensio	46.51%	23.26%	20.93%	9.3%
Writing	6.98%	25.58%	58.14%	9.3%
Speaking	2.33%	16.27%	11.63%	69.77%

Ranked 1st or 2nd importance by % of respondents

1. Reading Comprehension 79.07 %
2. Listening Comprehension 54.08%
3. Writing 32.59%.
4. Speaking 18.60%

2. Relative importance of specific text/task types within skill areas

Reading

Text Type	Very Important	Important	Not Important
textbooks	76.92%	21.54%	1.54%
technical articles	7.81%	25%%	67.19%
technical manuals	25.4%	41.27%	33.33%
course handouts	57.81%	34.38%	7.81%
computer texts	19.05%	55.56%	25.4%
instructions (labs, assignments)	63.49%	30.16%	6.35%

Writing

Text/Task Type	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Lab reports/assignments	78.69%	13.11%	8.2%
Field trip reports	11.11%	29.63%	59.26%
Short projects	45.76%	32.2%	22.04%
Long projects	45.28%	26.42%	28.3%
Lecture notes	54.84%	37.1%	8.06%
Reponses to questions on text book parts	44.26%	44.26%	11.48%

Listening & Speaking

Text/Task Type	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Following lectures	72.58%	25.81%	1.61%
Listening to presentations	54.84%	33.87%	11.29%
Listening to instructions	59.68%	32.26%	8.06%
Participating in class discussion	25.81%	61.29%	12.9%
Asking questions in lectures	22.41%	62.07%	15.52%
Giving spoken presentations	36.21%	37.93%	25.86%

III Views on English Language Instruction in the College.

1. More time should be given to English Instruction.

strongly agree 48.39% agree 40.32% disagree 11.29%

2. English instruction should focus on **general** English.

strongly agree 23.33% agree 58.33% disagree 18.33%

3. English instruction should focus on **specific language needs** of Engineering students.

strongly agree 60.32% agree 25.39% disagree 14.29%

4. More emphasis should be placed on developing students' spoken language.

strongly agree 43.75% agree 46.87% disagree 9.38%

5. Some instruction should focus on language needs of engineering students after College.

strongly agree 20.34% agree 61.02% disagree 18.64%

6. Only students who already have good English Language proficiency should be admitted to the College.

strongly agree 27.87% agree 39.34% disagree 32.79%

2.2 Students

2.2.1 Discussion

As in the discussion in section 2.1.1., this discussion is based primarily on findings from responses given to questionnaire items. However, this is supplemented at times with information generated from interviews and from our observations of classes. Discussion of the data aims to compare findings from students' responses with those from F and TA responses and also to identify any divergence between the 3 groups of students and therefore, among needs as students progress through the College. The reader will recall that the 3 groups are composed of students at various stages of undergraduate study: 098 students (098Ss) are primarily involved in 100 level courses, 123 students (123Ss) in 100 and 200 level courses and 221 (221Ss) students in 300 and 400 level courses.

Sample Population

Questionnaire data was obtained from a sample of three groups of students (total N=210) in the College. An equal number of completed questionnaires were processed from 3 groups of students registered in the 3 English courses, 098, 123 and 221.

The sample consisted of a heavier preponderance of males to females (2 to 1) from 098 courses, an almost equal number of males and females (36 and 34 respectively) from the 123 courses and a greater preponderance of females to males (approx. 4 to 3) in the 221 courses. This balance roughly represents the gender balance of students enrolled in the College over the four years of

undergraduate study. The composition of the 3 groups showed an unequal distribution of students from among the departments with many more questionnaires from students in the larger departments such as civil or electrical engineering compared to fewer students from the smaller departments such as industrial or petroleum engineering. Again these figures can be argued to approximate the distribution of students in the departments of the College.

All respondents were native Arabic speakers. Other than a handful (N=8), their English Language learning prior to College had been restricted to study of English as a school subject. A small number were found to use English at home or in social life (N= 18 and N=32 respectively). However, for the great majority (N= 160) use of English is restricted to study purposes. It may be tentatively suggested that these findings characterize the student population as whole in the College.

One limitation of the sample is that the questionnaire was administered in the spring semester. In the spring semester, a high proportion of 098Ss are those who are repeating the course. This would not be the case if the questionnaire had been administered in the fall semester.

Findings Related to Language Needs

1. Similarly to F and TA responses, more than two-thirds of 123Ss and 221Ss reported that English is used more than 80% of class time in their courses in the College. In contrast, higher numbers of 098Ss reported that English is used less than 80% of class time in their courses in the University. This higher proportion in the use of Arabic in class time may be due to the fact that 098Ss are following courses in the Science College whereas 123 and 221Ss students are very largely involved in courses given in the College of Engineering itself. It may also be the case, that a number of 100 courses are given by TAs rather than F. It was reported during interviews and observed during investigations that only some TAs have a good command of English.

2. 098 and 123 students saw listening comprehension as the most important skill followed by reading comprehension and speaking as equally important and writing of least importance. 221Ss, however, saw reading comprehension as significantly more important than speaking. Although students agree with F and TAs on the greater importance of receptive as opposed to productive skills, unlike F and TAs, they see listening as more important than reading and speaking as more important than writing. It is interesting to note that the productive skills of speaking and writing in particular are seen as even less important by the final and pre-final year 221 students than by other groups of students.

3. Similarly to F and TA findings, the specific text/task types itemized in the questionnaire were generally agreed to be important (with the exception of *reading technical articles* and *writing field trip reports*).

On the whole, the number of respondents reporting inadequacy was low. For example, across the board only just over 25% of students felt themselves to have inadequate levels in technical vocabulary and just over 6% in writing. The tendency was for higher numbers of 098Ss than 221Ss (except in grammar) to see themselves as having deficiencies. In some cases this was quite marked. For example, 37.1% of 098Ss reported having inadequate technical vocabulary compared to just over 7% of 221Ss and more than 3 times as many 098Ss saw themselves as inadequate in reading comprehension compared to 221Ss.

F and TAs had identified 2 areas of deficiency - technical vocabulary and writing. Student responses agreed with the former but not the latter.

Suggestions for Action:

1. In light of the greater importance attributed to the receptive skill areas of reading and listening comprehension, ELU to consider the allocation of more instruction time to these areas.

2. The specific text/task types given the greatest importance by students, F and TAs to be a basis for discussion in ELU of course objectives/materials. Further sample materials to be collected from the departments of actual reports, instructions, etc.

3. Some instruction to be developed (possibly in conjunction with a reading/writing skills courses) to help students develop vocabulary learning strategies. This is particularly important for 098 level as it is here that students find vocabulary, especially technical vocabulary problematic.

4. Speaking has been identified as both important and an area in which many students feel themselves inadequate. Although it may be suspected that speaking is a want as much as a need in this environment, ELU to consider means of addressing this and meeting students' expectations. For example, teachers may try to ensure whole class or group discussion pre-writing/reading activities.

Findings on Views of English Language Instruction

1. A number of items in this section were evaluative in nature:

i I enjoy my English class

ii The content of my English course is interesting

iii My English course is easy

iv My English course helps me in my Engineering studies

v The English Language teachers here do a good job

Evaluations were highly positive. For example, very high levels of agreement were seen in the responses to i above with only approx. 25% of 098 and 123 students disagreeing with this and even fewer (17%) 221 students. Few students (around 30% of 098/221Ss and 10% of 123Ss) disagreed with the idea that their English courses helped them in their engineering studies, for which ELU should take credit.

2. The highest level of agreement was accorded to the idea that more should be done to help students with speaking. Almost no one disagreed with this.

3. Least agreement was accorded to the idea that more time should be given to English instruction, with disagreement as high as 40% among 123Ss. 221Ss, possibly in the light of their experience as final year students, differed on this with approx. 23% disagreement.

4. As was the case in F and TA responses, students agreed that instruction should focus on both general and specific English for engineering studies. However, marginally more agreed preferred specific language focus to general (mean scores of disagreement - 11.18 and 24.28 respectively) and higher numbers of students strongly agreed that the focus should be specific rather than general (mean scores - 54.33 and 42.58 respectively).

5. Two items focused on the role of English in the College:
i Having good English is important in this College
ii English is my least important course

That English is seen as important by the great majority of students is evident in little disagreement with i (mean of disagree scores - 3.71%) and strong disagreement with ii. (mean of disagree scores - 69.88%).

Suggestions for Action:

1. This evaluation of English courses to be compared with other course evaluations received by ELU.

2. In any discussion held to consider the idea of giving more time to English instruction, the views of students to be considered. Our findings indicate that this idea would meet resistance among a number of 100 and 200 level students.

3. ELU should continue to offer instruction focused largely on the language needs of Engineers. As with F, however, there is a need for a number of students to be made aware of the rationale behind this approach. This could be done through an orientation session.

Findings Related to Language Learning

1. Generally, there was a high level of agreement to the items in section IV stating different ways of learning English. Therefore, it can be cautiously assumed that the students perceive themselves to learn in a range of ways. However, due to the much higher levels of disagreement given to item 8 and 12 (mean of scores 32.12% and 34.6% respectively)and the very low level of disagreement given to item 3 (7.2%), it would appear that a good number of students do not prefer to learn English independently.

2. Interaction Patterns

In terms of interaction groupings in class which students see as contributing to their learning, there was a slightly higher level of agreement concerning the value of learning in groups compared to pairwork (approx. 85% agreement in the former case and 70% in the latter case). However, even higher numbers of students prefer the traditional, teacher-fronted type classroom as evidenced by the very high level of agreement accorded to item 3.

3. Skills Practice

Three items (1,2 and 11) asked respondents how useful learning by doing skills work was for them. Although practice in each 3 of the skills areas (reading, conversations and writing) were seen as beneficial to the learning of language, a much stronger level of agreement was given to *learning by conversations* with over 50% of respondents choosing 'strongly agree' compared with approx. 30% for reading and 28-40% for writing.

4. Language Systems

The highest number of 'strongly agree' responses was seen in relation to item 4 *I like to learn many new words* (over 60% of respondents). A lesser but, nevertheless, large number of students like to learn by studying grammar. The second highest level of strongly agree responses was seen in responses to item number 9, *I learn from mistakes.* These three findings indicate the high value students give to the direct focus on language systems.

Suggestions for Action:

1. As students perceive themselves to learn in a range of ways, classes in ELU can usefully incorporate a wider variety of teaching techniques and methods.

2. The very high value perceived by learners of *learning through conversations* indicates the need for language classes, even those focusing on reading or writing skills developments, to incorporate some speaking activities and/or encouragement of student spoken production.

3. As students perceive great value in learning from directly focusing on language systems, grammar and especially vocabulary, ELU to consider its present curriculum and possibly enlarge the role of vocabulary and grammar study. This may be done in conjunction with reading and/or writing classes but the desirability of more emphasis in these areas and for work on error correction is indicated

grammar. The second highest level of strongly agree responses was seen in responses to item number 9, *I learn from my mistakes.* These three findings indicate the high value students give to the direct focus on language systems.

Suggestions for Action:

1. As students perceive themselves to learn in a range of ways, classes in ELU can usefully incorporate a wider variety of teaching techniques and methods. For example, even though there is slightly stronger preference for teacher-fronted classes, sizable numbers of students perceived the value of group and pair work.

2. The very high value perceived by learners of *learning through conversations* indicates the need for language classes, even those focusing on reading and writing skills development, to incorporate some speaking activities and/or encouragement of student spoken production.

3. As students perceive great value in learning from directly focusing on language systems, grammar and especially vocabulary, ELU to consider its present curriculum and possibly enlarge the role of vocabulary and grammar study. This may be done in conjunction with reading and/or writing classes but the desirability of more emphasis in these areas and for work on error correction is indicated.

2.2.2. Presentation of Data

I Background Information

Total Number of Respondents = 210

Sex:

	098	123	221
males	48	36	30
females	21	34	39
no response	1	-	1
Total	70	70	70

Department in the College:

	098	123	221
Electrical	16	13	13
Computer	8	11	15
Chemical	3	9	13
Industrial	4	6	2
Mechanical	17	14	2
Petroleum	2	3	5
Civil	20	14	20

English Language experience before College
(more than one option is possible)

	098	123	221
English as a foreign language at school	70	66	67
Attended an English medium school	-	1	-
Lived abroad	1	3	3

Native Language

	098	123	221
Arabic	70	70	70
Other	-	-	-

When respondents use English (more than one option is possible)

	098	123	221	Total
When studying	66	65	70	201
When socializing	11	5	16	32
At home	6	3	7	16

II Language Needs in the College

1. Views on percentage of time English is used in classes in other subjects in the College.

	approx. 100%	80-99%	60-79%	less than 60%
098	6	29	19	15
123	12	33	19	6
221	19	30	18	3

2. Relative importance of skill areas.

098

	Ranking			
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Reading Comprehension	12.1%	36.4%	37.9%	13.6%
Listening Comprehension	40.9%	28.8%	15.15%	15.15%
Speaking	30.3%	18.2%	25.75%	25.75%
Writing	16.7%	16.7%	21.2%	45.4%

Ranked as either of 1st or 2nd importance
Listening Comprehension 69.7%
Reading Comprehension 48.5%
Speaking 48.5%
Writing 33.4%

123

	Ranking			
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Reading Comprehension	13.43%	37.31%	34.33%	14.93%
Listening Comprehension	56.72%	13.43%	17.91%	11.43%
Speaking	23.88%	26.87%	25.37%	23.88%
Writing	5.97%	22.39%	22.39%	49.25%

Ranked as either of 1st or 2nd importance
Listening Comprehension 70.15%
Reading Comprehension 50.74%
Speaking 50.74%
Writing 28.36%

221

Ranking

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Reading Comprehension	23.9%	43.3%	22.4%	10.4%
Listening Comprehension	50.75	23.9%	16.4%	8.95%
Speaking	22.4%	17.9%	26.9%	32.8%
Writing	3%	16.4%	32.8%	47.8%

Ranked as either of 1st or 2nd importance
Listening Comprehension 74.65%
Reading Comprehension 67.2%
Speaking 40.3%
Writing 19.4%

3. Relative importance of text/task types in skill areas.

Reading Text/Task Types

	very important	important	not important
Text-books			
098	50%	37.1%	12.9%
123	42.86%	51.43%	5.71%
221	64.3%	34.3%	1.4%
Technical articles			
098	27.2%	41.4%	31.4%
123	18.57%	51.43%	30%
221	27.2%	37.1%	35.7%
Manuals			
098	15.7%	42.9%	41.4%
123	11.43%	57.14%	31.43%
221	18.5%	42.9%	38.6%
Course handouts			
098	57.1%	34.3%	8.6%
123	51.43%	47.14%	1.43%
221	60%	35.7%	4.3%
Texts on computer			
098	21.4%	52.9%	25.7%
123	28.57%	50%	21.43%
221	30%	41.4%	28.6%
Instructions for labs/assignments			
098	55.5%	35.7%	8.6%
123	46.38%	46.38%	7.25%
221	54.3%	37.1%	8.6%

Writing Text/Task Types

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Lab reports/assignments			
098	68.6%	25.7%	5.7%
123	81.43%	15.71%	2.86%
221	78.3%	18.8%	2.9%
Field trip reports			
098	15.94%	44.93%	39.13%
123	20%	47.14%	32.86%
221	39.13%	33.33%	27.54%
Short Projects			
098	30%	52.9%	17.1%
123	28.57%	61.43%	10%
221	37.7%	49.3%	13%
Long Projects			
098	24.3%	44.3%	31.4%
123	37.14%	42.86%	20%
221	50.72%	39.13%	10.15%
Making Notes in Lectures			
098	54.3%	32.8%	12.9%
123	58.57%	31.43%	10%
221	62.32%	27.57%	10.15%
Answering questions in relation to parts of text-book			
098	63.8%	26.1%	10.1%
123	54.29%	52.86%	7.14%
221			

Listening & Speaking Text/Task Types

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Following lectures			
098	72.8%	27.2%	-
123	68.57%	27.14%	4.29%
221	73.9%	20.3%	5.8%
Following class question/answer			
098	65.7%	30%	4.3%
123	64.29%	31.43%	4.29%
221	61.8%	24.6%	7.3%
Listening to spoken presentations			
098	45.7%	38.6%	15.7%
123	42.86%	45.71%	11.43%
221	42%	50.7%	7.3%
Listening to instructions			
098	45.7%	44.3%	10%
123	52.86%	42.86%	4.29%
221	50.7%	42%	7.3%
Participating in discussions			
098	54.3%	31.4%	14.3%
123	51.43%	34.29%	7%
221	59.4%	29%	11.16%
Asking questions in class			
098	51.4%	38.6%	10%
123	61.43%	34.29%	4.29%
221	59.4%	30.4%	10.2%
Giving spoken presentations			
098	26.4%	36.8%	36.8%
123	25.71%	37.14%	34.29%
221	52.2%	24.6%	23.2%

Evaluation of own abilities and knowledge of English

	Good	Adequate	Inadequate
Reading			
098	45.7%	41.4%	12.9%
123	51.43%	47.14%	
221	71.4%	25.7%	2.9%
mean of scores	56.18%	38.08%	5.74%
Writing			
098	48.6%	44.3%	7.1%
123	42.86%	50%	7.14%
221	50%	45.7%	4.3%
mean of scores	47.15%	46.67%	6.18%
Speaking			
098	27.15%	45.7%	27.15%
123	20.29%	50.72%	28.99%
221	35.7%	47.2%	17.1%
mean of scores	27.71%	47.87%	24.41%
Listening			
098	42.9%	35.7%	21.4%
123	57.98%	36.23%	5.8%
221	55.72%	37.14%	7.14%
mean of scores	52.2%	36.36%	11.44%
Grammar			
098	28.6%	51.4%	20%
123	44.93%	44.93%	10.14%
221	25.7%	51.4%	22.9%
mean of scores	33.08%	49.24%	17.68%
General vocabulary			
098	17.1%	54.3%	28.6%
123	36.23%	55.07%	8.7%
221	34.3%	52.8%	12.9%
mean of scores	29.21	54.06%	16.73%
Technical vocabulary			
098	22.9%	40%	37.1%
123	26.09%	40.58%	33.33%
221	57.1%	35.7%	7.2%
mean of scores	35.35%	35.76%	25.88%

Ranking of 10 most important text/task types according to % responses of very important or important

1. Reading textbooks
2. Following lectures
3. Reading instructions
4. Reading course handouts
5/6. Listening to instructions
5/6. Making lecture notes
7. Writing lab resports/assignments
8. Listening to presentations
9. Writing responses to questions on parts of textbook
10. Participating in class discussion

3. Perceptions of students' competence.

	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Reading Comprehension	9.68%	56.45%	33.87%
Writing	8.06%	29.03%	62.9%
Listening Comprehension	9.68%	64.52%	25.8%
Speaking	1.61%	64.52%	33.87%
Technical Vocabulary	11.29%	37.09%	51.63%

On the whole, similar levels of importance were given to the text/task types by all 3 groups. Exceptions, however, were *giving spoken presentations* and *writing long reports* which were seen by more 221 respondents as 'very important' compared to 098 and 123 students (over 50% compared to approx. 25% and over 50% compared to between 24-37% in the latter case).

In regard to the specific text/task types accorded greatest importance, the tendency was for more 221Ss to see these texts or tasks as 'very important' than the other groups. For example, approx. 50% of 098 respondents and 43% of 123 respondents saw *reading textbooks* as 'very important' whereas over 64% of 221 respondents viewed it as such. Similarly, *making notes in lectures* was seen as 'very important' by over 60% of 221Ss compared to approx. half of 098Ss.

4. In regard to students' appraisal of their own abilities and knowledge, the order of difficulties experienced is listed below with 1 as the area seen as inadequate in relation to study needs by most respondents.

1. Technical vocabulary
2. Speaking
3. Grammar
4. General vocabulary
5. Listening
6. Writing
7. Reading

evidenced in questionnaire responses. Only a couple of the tasks itemized received a relatively low rating of importance by F and TAs. These were *reading technical articles* and *writing field trip reports.*

The following specific task/text types were given the highest rating of importance by F and TAs. They are given below in order, with 1 as the most important.

1. Reading textbooks
2. Following lectures
3. Reading instructions
4. Reading course handouts
5/6 Listening to instructions
5/6 Making lecture notes
7. Writing lab reports/assignments
8. Listening to presentations
9. Writing responses to questions on parts of a textbook
10. Participating in class discussions

3. Perceptions of Competence

Writing was one of the two areas in which over half of F and TAs rated students as having unsatisfactory levels of competence. However, this finding needs to be read with caution. F and TAs have little evidence of the level of student receptive skills as opposed to their productive skills. Therefore, this finding is not surprising and must be collaborated with students' own perceptions. It must also be seen in juxtaposition with the relative unimportance accredited to writing in the College. Knowledge of technical vocabulary was the other area in which students were judged as having an unsatisfactory level.

7. Students' success or failure is related to their proficiency in English

	Overall	Faculty	TAs
agree	40.63%	32.4%	51.9%
unsure	18.75%	22.6%	14.8%
disagree	40.63%	45%	33.3%

III Views on English Language Instruction

1. More time should be given to English Language Instruction

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	9.4%	43.3%	37.3%
123	28.57%	31.43%	40%
221	42.7%	33.8%	23.5%

2. The content of my English course is interesting

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	7.3%	43.3%	37.3%
123	21.43%	35.71%	42.86%
221	7.46%	56.72%	35.82%

3. Instruction should focus on **general** English

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	44.8%	37.3%	17.9%
123	31.43%	22.86%	31.43%
221	51.5%	25%	23.5%

4. Instruction should focus on the **specific** language needs of Engineering students

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	47.1%	35.3%	17.6%
123	60%	32.86%	7.14%
221	55.9%	35.3%	8.8%

5. More should be done to help students with speaking

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	85.3%	13.2%	1.5%
123	88.57%	11.43%	-
221	85.3%	14.7%	-

6. I enjoy my English class

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	11.9%	62.7%	25.4%
123	28.57%	45.71%	24.29%
221	44.12%	38.24%	17.64%

7. Having good English is important in this college.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	71.2%	25.8%	3%
123	77.14%	17.14%	5.71%
221	80.9%	16.2%	2.9%

8. Some instruction should focus on the English needs of Engineers after College.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	67.7%	27.9%	4.4%
123	71.43%	28.57%	-
221	76.5%	19.1%	4.4%

9. English is my least important course.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	10.3%	20.6%	69.1%
123	11.43%	17.14%	71.43%
221	8.8%	22.1%	69.1%

10. My English course is easy.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	8.9%	46.3%	44.8%
123	17.14%	60%	22.86%
221	27.94%	48.53%	23.53%

11. The English language teachers here do a good job.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	29.4%	45.6%	25%
123	45.71%	40%	14.29%
221	41.2%	42.6%	16.2%

12. My English course helps me in my Engineering studies.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	36.8%	35.3%	27.9%
123	34.29%	55.71%	10%
221	35.3%	32.35%	32.35%

IV Language Learning

1. I learn by reading.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	31.4%	61.4%	7.2%
123	31.43%	61.43%	7.14%
221	28.6%	61.4%	10%

2. I learn by conversations.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	65.7%	30%	4.3%
123	54.29%	44.29%	1.43%
221	52.86%	40%	7.14%

3. I like the teacher to explain everything to us.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	55.7%	37.1%	7.2%
123	55.71%	34.29%	10%
221	57.1%	38.6%	4.3%

4. I like to learn many new words.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	68.6%	28.6%	2.8%
123	62.86%	35.71%	1.43%
221	68.6%	28.6%	2.8%

5. I like to work in groups in class.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	54.3%	32.8%	12.9%
123	55.71%	30%	14.29%
221	54.3%	32.8%	12.9%

6. I like to study grammar.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	44.3%	41.4%	14.3%
123	31.88%	46.38%	7.25%
221	39.1%	43.5%	17.4%

7. I like to use a textbook.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	27.5%	49.3%	23.2%
123	25.71%	55.71%	18.57%
221	20%	52.9%	27.1%

8. I like the teacher ro give us tasks to work on.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	20.3%	50.7%	29%
123	25.71%	35.71%	38.57%
221	18.5%	52.9%	28.6%

9. I learn from my mistakes.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	59.4%	36.2%	4.4%
123	67.14%	30%	2.86%
221	65.7%	34.3%	-

10. I like to work in pairs.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	43.5%	29%	27.5%
123	41.43%	41.43%	25.49%
221	40%	42.9%	17.1%

11. I learn by doing writing.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	41.4%	47.2%	11.4%
123	30%	58.57%	11.43%
221	28.6%	60%	11.4%

12. I like studying English by myself.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree
098	31.8%	36.4%	31.8%
123	26.09%	36.23%	37.68%
221	30%	35.7%	34.3%

N/A
3.96
Interview Protocol

Staff Interviews

Name of interviewee:

Background Information
1. Department

2. Years teaching at KU

3. What courses teaches

4. Contact tel:

Communicative Needs

1. What % of time do you use English in class?
   Why/when do you use Arabic?

2. What language tasks do you require of students? In

writing:

reading:

listening:

speaking:

3. What are the most important skills for students to be successful in this college? Rank:

reading
writing
speaking
listening

4. What major language problems do you observe?

5. How many students and which students have problems?
(e.g. Students good at Engineering but poor at English?)

6.What is your response to such problems?

7. What do you know about the courses offered by ELU?
(and How do you evaluate them?)

8. How did you go about improving your English?

9. What should the role of ELU be in the university (support undergraduate sts, postgraduates, prepare sts for workplace, teach basic English, help with study skills etc.)?

10. What should be the entrance and exit level of students in English?

Appendix 2

English Language Unit
College of Engineering
Kuwait University

This questionnaire aims to find out about the English Language needs of students in the College of Engineering. Please answer all the items carefully because the information you give will help the Unit with the development of English Language instruction in the College.

I. Background Information

First of all, please provide some information about yourself.
Please tick (✓) the appropriate space(s).

1. Sex:
___ male ___ female

2. Department in the college:
___ electrical ____ computer ____ chemical ____industrial
___ mechanical ____ petroleum ____civil

3. English language experience **before** college:

___ I studied English as a subject at school
___ I attended an English-medium school
___ I lived abroad
___ Other (please specify) _____

4. Present English course:

____098 ____123 ____221

Expected grade
___ Pass ___A ____C
___ Fail ___B ____D

5. If your present English course is 123 or 221, please answer this question. If not, leave it blank.

Did you take the 098 course in the college?
____ Yes Number of times: ___ 1 ___ 2
____ No

6. Is your native language Arabic?
____ Yes
____ No

7. When do you use English?
____ when studying
____ when socializing
____ at home
____ Others (please specify) _____
_____

II Language Needs in the College

Now for some information about using English for your studies.

1. What percentage of the time is English used in your <u>other classes</u> in the college?

____ approx. 100%
____ 80-99%
____ 60-79%
____ less than 60%

2. Of the four major English skills, which are the most important for success in your other subjects in the College?

Number choices 1 - 4, with 1 as the most important.

__ Reading comprehension
__ Listening comprehension
__ Speaking
__ Writing

3. How important are these tasks in English for your other subjects in the college? Circle the appropriate number according to the following scale.
1 = very important 2 = important 3 = not important

Reading

1---2---3	text-books
1---2---3	technical articles in journals
1---2---3	manuals
1---2---3	course handouts
1---2---3	texts on the computer
1---2---3	instructions for assignments/projects/labs

Others (please specify) _____
_____

Writing

1---2---3	lab reports/assignments
1---2---3	field-trip reports
1---2---3	short projects
1---2---3	long projects
1---2---3	making notes in lectures
1---2---3	answering questions related to part of the text-book

Others (please specify) _____
_____

Listening and Speaking

1---2---3	following lectures
1---2---3	following question/answer sessions in class
1---2---3	listening to spoken presentations
1---2---3	listening to instructions (for labs/assignments)
1---2---3	participating in discussions
1---2---3	asking questions in lectures
1---2---3	giving spoken presentations

Others (please specify) _____

_____

4.. In relation to your other subjects in the college, evaluate your abilities and knowledge of English in the following areas.

Please circle the appropriate number according to the following scale.
1 = good 2 = satisfactory 3 = unsatisfactory

1---2---3	Reading
1---2---3	Writing
1---2---3	Speaking
1---2---3	Listening
1---2---3	Grammar
1---2---3	General Vocabulary
1---2---3	Technical Vocabulary

III English Language Instruction

And next, your opinions about English Language instruction in the College of Engineering.

Here are some ideas about English Language instruction in the College. Please indicate how far you agree with each idea.

1 = strongly agree 2 = agree 3 = disagree

1---2---3	More time should be given to English instruction
1---2---3	The content of my English course is interesting
1---2---3	Instruction should focus on general English
1---2---3	Instruction should focus on the English needed for Engineering studies

1---2---3	More should be done to help students with speaking
1---2---3	I enjoy my English class
1---2---3	Having good English is important in this college
1---2---3	Some instruction should focus on the English needs of Engineers after college
1---2---3	English is my least important course
1---2---3	My English course is easy
1---2---3	The English language teachers here do a good job
1---2---3	My English course helps me in my Engineering studies

IV Language Learning

And finally, some questions about the ways you learn English.

From your experience, do you agree that the ways below have been useful for you in learning English?

1= strongly agree 2 = agree 3 = disagree

1---2---3	I learn by reading
1---2---3	I learn by conversations
1---2---3	I like the teacher to explain everything to us
1---2---3	I like to learn many new words
1---2---3	I like to work in groups in class
1---2---3	I like to study grammar
1---2---3	I like to use a textbook
1---2---3	I like the teacher to give us tasks to work on
1---2---3	I learn from my mistakes
1---2---3	I like to work in pairs
1---2---3	I learn by doing writing
1---2---3	I like studying English by myself

Others (please specify) _____

_____

Do you have any further comments about English language instruction in this college?

_____

_____

_____

Thank You

Appendix 3

ELU NA Spring 1996

Class Observation

Date: _____
Time:_____
Course:_____
Department:_____
Doctor: _____
Observer:_____

Class type:
lecture:____ seminar/tutorial_____
lab _____ other (explain) _____

I. Instructional practice

A) Note the approx. percentage of time given over in the class to the practice

B) Note the language used in each category (i.e. English or Arabic)

lecture (monologue) _____
discusssion (student to student) _____
instruction giving (instructor) _____
lab activity (students) _____
instructor questioning of students_____
student initiated questions _____
small group discussion _____
smal group activity (state nature of)_____
presentation (state who by) _____
other _____
_____
_____

II. Instructional Aids

Which of the following were used in the class?

____ over-heads
____ handout (take a copy for ELU if possible)
____ video/film
____ blackboard
____ models
____ tools or other realia (specify nature)
____ charts/diagrams
____ other (please specify)

III. Student Activity (note some samples of the actual language used)

taking notes: _____

asking questions: _____

giving comments: _____

asking for clarification or repetition: _____

conducting lab, e.g. explaning instructions to another _____

other (please specify) : _____

IV: Student difficulties.
Note down any observations you have of the nature, extent and source of any language-related difficulties experienced by students (or staff) in the class.

V: Do you have any other useful information about the class you observed or about this observation protocol?